

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for screening video communications within an interactive television system, the method comprising:

intercepting a video communication request sent by a caller to a particular recipient among a plurality of potential recipients at the interactive television system;

identifying the caller using information contained within the video communication request;

identifying the particular recipient using information contained within the video communication request;

locating an unauthorized caller list specific to the particular recipient;

determining whether the caller is included within the[[an]] unauthorized caller list; and

rejecting the video communication request in response to the caller being included within the unauthorized caller list.

2. (canceled).

3. (canceled).

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the video communication request is intercepted by an interactive television system associated with the recipient.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the video communication request is intercepted by an intermediate network node linking the caller and the recipient.

6. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein the intermediate network node is selected from the group consisting of a cable head-end, an internet server, and a satellite broadcast center.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein identifying the caller comprises:

extracting an identifier of the caller from the video communication request.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the identifier is selected from the group consisting of a name of the caller, a network address of the caller, and a network address of an interactive television system of the caller.

9. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the unauthorized caller list comprises a list of unauthorized identifiers, and wherein determining comprises:

determining whether the extracted identifier is an unauthorized identifier.

10. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein rejecting comprises:

notifying the caller that the video communication request has been rejected.

11. (currently amended) A method for screening video communications in an interactive television system, the method comprising:

intercepting a video communication request sent by a caller to a particular recipient among a plurality of potential recipients at the interactive television system;

identifying the caller using information contained within the video communication request;

identifying the particular recipient using information contained within the video communication request;

locating an authorized caller list specific to the particular recipient;

determining whether the caller is identified within the authorized caller list;

and

accepting the video communication request only if the caller is identified within the authorized caller list.

12. (canceled).

13. (canceled).

14. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the video communication request is intercepted by an interactive television system associated with the recipient.

15. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the video communication request is intercepted by an intermediate network node linking the caller and the recipient.

16. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein the intermediate network node is selected from the group consisting of a cable head-end, an internet server, and a satellite broadcast center.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein identifying the caller comprises:

extracting an identifier of the caller from the video communication request.

18. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein the identifier is selected from the group consisting of a name of the caller, a network address of the caller, and a network address of an interactive television system of the caller.

19. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein the authorized caller list comprises a list of authorized identifiers, and wherein determining comprises:

determining whether the extracted identifier is an authorized identifier.

20. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein accepting comprises:

establishing two-way video communication between the caller and the recipient.

Claims 21-40 (canceled).

41. (currently amended) A system for screening video communications in an interactive television system, the system comprising:

an interception component configured to intercept a video communication request sent by a caller to a particular recipient among a plurality of potential recipients at the interactive television system;

an identification component configured to identify the caller using information contained within the video communication request and to identify the particular recipient using information contained within the video communication request;

an authorization component configured to locate an unauthorized caller list specific to the particular recipient and to determine whether the caller is identified within the unauthorized caller list and reject the video communication request in response to the caller being identified within the unauthorized caller list.

42. (canceled).

43. (canceled).

44. (original) The system of claim 41, wherein the interception component operates within an interactive television system of the recipient.

45. (original) The system of claim 41, wherein the interception component operates within an intermediate network node linking the caller and the recipient.

46. (original) The system of claim 45, wherein the intermediate network node is selected from the group consisting a cable head-end, an internet server, and a satellite broadcast center.

47. (original) The system of claim 41, wherein the identification component is further configured to extract an identifier of the caller from the video communication request.

48. (original) The system of claim 47, wherein the identifier is selected from the group consisting of a name of the caller, a network address of the caller, and a network address of an interactive television system of the caller.

49. (original) The system of claim 47, wherein the unauthorized caller list comprises a list of unauthorized identifiers, and wherein the authorization component is further configured to determine whether the extracted identifier is an unauthorized identifier.

50. (original) The system of claim 41, wherein the authorization component is further configured to notify the caller that the video communication request has been rejected.

51. (currently amended) A system for screening video communications in an interactive television system, the system comprising:

an interception component configured to intercept a video communication request sent by a caller to a particular recipient among a plurality of potential recipients at the interactive television system;

an identification component configured to identify the caller using information contained within the video communication request and to identify the particular recipient using information contained within the video communication request;

an authorization component configured to locate an authorized caller list specific to the particular recipient and to determine whether the caller is identified within the[[an]] authorized caller list and accept the video communication request only if the caller is identified within the authorized caller list.

Claims 52-58 (canceled).

59. (currently amended) A system for screening video communications in an interactive television system, the system comprising:

means for intercepting a video communication request sent by a caller to a particular recipient among a plurality of potential recipients at the interactive television system;

means for identifying the caller using information contained within the video communication request;

means for identifying the particular recipient using information contained within the video communication request;

means for locating an unauthorized caller list specific to the particular recipient;

means for locating an unauthorized caller list applicable to all recipients;

means for determining whether the caller is identified within either[[the]] unauthorized caller list; and

means for rejecting the video communication request in response to the caller being identified within either[[the]] unauthorized caller list.

60. (currently amended) A system for screening video communications in an interactive television system, the system comprising:

means for intercepting a video communication request sent by a caller to a particular recipient among a plurality of potential recipients at the interactive television system;

means for identifying the caller using information contained within the video communication request;

means for identifying the particular recipient using information contained within the video communication request;

means for locating an authorized caller list specific to the particular recipient;

means for locating an authorized caller list applicable to all recipients;

means for determining whether the caller is identified within either[[an]] authorized caller list; and

means for accepting the video communication request only if the caller is identified within either[[the]] authorized caller list.

61. (canceled).